

## INTERVIEWS:

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BERLIN - WARSAWWednesday, January 20, 1937 (Continued)

appointments will continue to be so mediocre that excellence will be very hard to find before long. Others believe that with the Jewish question "liquidated" ability will be again recognized and favored.

I am impressed with the progressive isolation of Germany from the rest of the world through a so highly controlled press. There is not the same competition in the universities as there was five years ago, for many young men are being drawn into the army. There is some evidence of a shortage of materials owing to demands of rearmament.

In hotels, on the street, in public places, the faces of the most intelligent and capable looking people are invariably grave, preoccupied, and certainly apathetic toward the brown shirts and all that goes with them.

Poland, from the train, looked cold, uninviting, and not prosperous. At 1:30 Polish time and 3:30 Russian time, we got to the Russian border. Very few persons on the train by that time. Baggage clearance, etc., easily effected in a large, clean, and attractive new station. Changed over to a Russian train in which the compartments are large, stark, much washed, but not entirely clean, and rather primitive. Our accommodations are technically described as "second class soft."

MOSCOWThursday, January 21, 1937

Arrived about five in the afternoon after a day's trip in snow-covered country. The towns en route showed a good many new factories, new construction, and general activity.

With cigarettes of not extraordinary quality costing \$1.40 for 20, I am glad that we have Intourist tickets for the purchase of life's necessities.

No one met the train at Moscow from the Intourist. Waited about forty-five minutes, and finally Mr. Epstein, formerly a citizen of New York and a rather attractive and earnest man of twenty-eight, turned up, and took us to the hotel.

Dinner at 9:30, after which we walked about a little, Red Square, etc. I was shooed away from looking for John Reed's grave in the Red Square by a soldier.

The general appearance of Moscow greatly contrasts with nine years ago in point of the improved clothing of people, their much improved nutri-

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MOSCOWThursday, January 21, 1937 (Continued)

tion, and the profusion, relative to 1927, of automobiles and trucks. Many new buildings, and much more activity on the street, even in this bitter cold of 25 degrees below zero.

Our guide, Epstein, is assigned by the Voks. He went around with Sigerist, and consequently is rather well qualified to help us out.

MOSCOW - BOLSHOVOFriday, January 22, 1937

Since Lenin died on January 22, this is taken as a day of rest.

Lina Stern took us out to the rest house for intellectuals at Bolshovo. Saw Kupalov, and met a very talkative and positive professor of economical energetics; the subject in more familiar English being the distribution of electricity.

Remember that the Soviet government has established an all Jewish Republic east of Lake Baikal by the name of Biro Bidjian.

One or two figures on the cost of living were interesting. Our guide pays 18 rubles a month for his rent, which is 4 per cent of his salary, 450 rubles a month. Eggs cost 5 rubles a dozen. Oranges, 3 rubles 50 a piece, but the most important fact about oranges appears to be that they come from communist Spain. Epstein's salary of 450 rubles a month contrasts more than I had expected with Professor Stern's 3,000 rubles a month; the latter being at the present rate of exchange about \$7,200 a year.

Noting a large number of school buildings on the way out to Bolshovo, I was told that the Moscow Soviet of 500 members had voted the construction of 150 schools for 800 pupils each about 18 months ago, and that most of these were completed.

Lina Stern told us that we could talk with the professors, but that we could not approach the government directly on questions of grants of equipment or apparatus, since the government would lose face politically by dealing with such questions. The needs, however, are considerable, especially for chemicals and instruments manufactured abroad.

Back to the hotel in the evening. We had a visit from Bronner, Rakovsky, and Strashun. Strashun is a professor of history of medicine, and well informed on the status of medical education in Russia. He gives the population of the U.S.S.R. as two hundred million, the medical population now is ninety thousand. Twelve thousand new physicians in 1937, fourteen thousand in 1938, sixteen thousand in 1939, twenty thousand in 1940, and

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MOSCOW - BOLSHOVOFriday, January 22, 1937 (Continued)

twenty-two thousand in 1941. By 1942, there will therefore be about one hundred and forty-two thousand physicians in Russia.

No evidence of timidity or unwillingness to deal with us as representatives of the R.F. Sigerist's visits much appreciated. No clear picture of what the trials imply, obviously an exceedingly complicated subject.

MOSCOWSaturday, January 23, 1937

With Strashun and Stern to various institutes and laboratories. Oppenheim would probably be the person for Fitzgerald to see; also Professor Vnukov at the neuropsychic prophylactic institute; and Molkov at the institute for the protection of infancy and adolescence.

Lawrentjeff is interested in the histological basis of the synapse.

Visited Baron, a young professor of histology, whose training was largely under the Soviet regime. He is interested and active.

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Great evidence of immense advance during the last nine years in point of textbooks, materials for instruction, opportunities for advanced work, and student discipline. Students form clubs in the different courses, and post summaries of foreign literature on the wall boards. Appearance of the students better than nine years ago. They are now required to take examinations for entrance in physics, chemistry, mathematics, Russian, and politics. By the middle of this year, 1937, they will have to present themselves in one foreign language (English). From 1936 on, students have had at least ten years of school previous to medical school.

There are about eighty thousand students now in medicine, pharmacy, and dentistry. Eighty-five per cent of these are in medicine. A little under a half are women. Only about 4 per cent of the professors are women; about twenty-four per cent of the aspirants are women. About 5 per cent of the students are thrown out during the first year. Over the five-year course, about 10 per cent are failed.

Before the war, there were twenty thousand doctors in Russia; now there are ninety. One doctor per thousand of the population is the objective, and in 1942 and afterwards there will be about twenty-two thousand physicians graduated each year.

Medical education at the present time is of three general types according to what is emphasized particularly in the last two years of the

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MOSCOWSaturday, January 23, 1937 (Continued)

five-year course. All students get the same training for the first three years, then about 15 per cent go into pediatrics, 10 per cent into hygiene and public health work, and 75 per cent go into general medicine.

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Visited the Hygienic Institute under Oppenheim. Met there Dr. N. V. Krasovskaja, who is much interested in the effect of environment and weather on disease.

Visited Lina Stern's institute; examinations going on. A very marked improvement from nine years ago from the point of equipment and discipline.

In a professor's family at present it is characteristic that about thirty per cent of the income is spent on food, 40 per cent on clothing, ten per cent on culture, 10 per cent on lodging, and the balance on other expenses not specified.

WEINBERGSunday, January 24, 1937

The librarian of the central library gives the following ratios year by year of RF to Russian appropriations for foreign medical literature:

<u>Date</u>	<u>RF</u>	<u>Russian</u>
1932	\$15,000	\$ 5,000
1933	\$15,000	\$10,000
1934	\$10,000	\$40,000
1935	\$10,000	\$70,000
1936	\$ 5,000	\$100,000

Their ideal is to spend about \$200,000 annually for foreign medical literature in the proportion of about 60 per cent for journals and 40 per cent for books. The new building has 1600 square meters, and there are now 517,000 volumes in the central library.

Müller called at the hotel; brief conversation.

Dinner at Lina Stern's.

In 1937, English becomes the obligatory foreign language for Russian medical students. There are now ninety members of the Academy of Sciences. A very considerable prestige, as in the old days, goes with membership. It is

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WEINBERGSunday, January 24, 1937

noticeable that decorations, titles, memberships in academics, and similar devices for personal identification for prestige, have increased very markedly since 1927.

After dinner at about midnight, Bronner showed us the new subway with much pride.

MOSCOWMonday, January 25, 1937

Visits to mental hospitals. Impressed with proportion of physicians to patients. This possibly larger than would be necessary if nursing were better done. It is evident that the chaos attendant upon the Revolution with typhus and food shortage wiped out large numbers of the chronic insane. Very doubtful if the rate of present incidence, dementia praecox, senile, psychosis, manic depressive, is any better now than previously. There is insistence, however, on the part of the Russians that minor neurosis and psychopathology of everyday life are much less than in Tsarist times.

Left in late p.m. for Leningrad.

LENINGRADTuesday, January 26, 1937

Train arrived late.

No particular help from representative from Voks in reaching various persons we wished to see.

Found out that Orbeli has left to attend Moscow trials at the request of the government as a representative of the academic group.

Dinner at Krasnagorski's. K makes the request that some of his friends in the American Pediatric Society write the American Ambassador, Davies, regarding him; so that he might get some protection in case suspicion falls on him heavily again.

LENINGRADWednesday, January 27, 1937

Visit to Prodcopaeu, who would like to visit the United States as a lecturer. I was not much impressed with his capacities or qualifications as a visitor.

Went out to Pavlov's laboratory, where we saw J. S. Rosenthal, who was with Barcroft. It is clear that no one person is the direct and un-

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LENINGRADWednesday, January 27, 1937

questioned successor of Pavlov in the field of conditioned reflexes.

Met Lindberg, a young Russian of Finnish-Swedish origin, who impressed me as keen and intelligent. He said that Prodcopaev would never be backed by Orbeli. When Pavlov died, there was a good deal of embitterment among his former assistants.

Leningrad is more shabby, and less active in nearly every way than Moscow. On the whole a rather depressing atmosphere, and suggestive of what might be the usual situation in all of the other cities of Russia except Moscow.

A few of the leaders like Orbeli have so many positions that their usefulness is diluted and dissipated so far as any one set of results is concerned. Most of the other teachers are heavily handicapped, and the political pressure for quantities of students is almost overwhelming. I can't escape the conclusion that the actual training of medical students is very poor indeed.

MOSCOWThursday, January 28, 1937

Arrived at 1:30 in the afternoon instead of 10 a.m. as scheduled, thus missing appointments with Bronner, Kaminski, and the chance of seeing Orbeli.

Visit to Koltzov's laboratory. Saw remarkably good moving pictures of fertilization and growth of rabbit ovum. Koltzov says that the genetic congress has been postponed. K's laboratory, or rather institute, presented a great improvement over what existed in 1927. K hard at work. Adequate equipment and books apparently; and a great deal of activity among junior workers.

Brenner called at the hotel before our departure, attitude friendly, and he speaks of the possibility of his getting to New York in April.

Left Moscow for Berlin at 11:30.

Russia still seems important to me by virtue of the size of its population, the area of the world it occupies, and the fact that it is really in many senses a United States of eastern Europe, providing sharp contrasts to the ununited condition of the western European powers. The doctrines and practices, which would be appropriate to pure communism, seemed to be less emphasized than in 1927. Stalin is more of an accomplished politician than

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MOSCOWThursday, January 28, 1937

an intellectual revolutionary. Stratification of power and differentiation of income certainly more marked than nine years ago. Status of medical education certainly improved in point of quality of students, emphasis on quality of performance, and availability of books and other teaching material. The character of investigative work in most instances is dubious; and in all instances calls for repetition and control. It is in many instances original and interesting, but experiments and deductions therefrom are inadequate and uncritical.